The Vault

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The Vault

by Rigel99

Summary

Will is frustrated. Hannibal lends a helping hand (or two.)

Chapter 1

Fear and self-loathing drove him there as much as kept him away from real human contact. Will Graham's infrequent visits to The Vault were a balm to a frustrated body that couldn't separate itself from his overcrowded mind. The only time such a separation could be achieved was in the blind recesses found in the dark rooms of The Vault. And after his encounter with Dr Hannibal Lecter earlier that day under the watchful and curious gaze of Jack Crawford, he'd never needed that separation and release more.

Hannibal didn't have to wait long outside the Academy at Quantico until he saw Will's car pull away from the building. He could tell from the direction of travel that he wasn't immediately heading home to Wolf Trap. No time like the present to delve into the mind of this intriguing individual, Hannibal considered. He started his car and pulled out, following him at a safe distance.

Parking his car a few blocks from the venue, Will made his way along semi-crowded pavements with a singular purpose towards his destination. Hannibal walked on the opposite side of the street, some yards behind him, keeping him in his peripheral vision. He watched Will disappear around the corner of a fairly inconspicuous building and smiled to himself. While Hannibal had never himself become acquainted with the venue, he knew about the reputation of The Vault from a few of his patients. Well, well, Mr Graham, he thought to himself. Hannibal hadn't planned on an intimate interlude quite so soon in their relationship but such an opportunity was far too delectable to pass over. With that thought and a singular purpose of his own, Hannibal followed.

The tension in his body lifted as soon as he entered the room. A different kind of darkness, in its physicality, as opposed to the usual dark he wandered whilst invading the minds of killers and psychopaths. He allowed it to wrap him up in its warm, relaxed embrace. Here he could lose himself. Here, he was fearless. Here, he could give himself over to his own senses without suffering an invasion of the same from others. Touch was the purpose, the goal, escape. Anonymous, simple, no-strings-attached intimacy. He sighed to himself as he felt a pair of strong, warm, long-fingered hands gently come to rest on his waist…

His scent was unmistakeable, as distinct and unique as the mind of the man himself. It took Hannibal only a few minutes to identify his prey amongst the other wanton bodies scattered throughout the sweaty, sex-infused air. The trail of the aroma led him to a quiet corner of the room. Hannibal was feeling somewhat heady with anticipation but kept his enthusiasm in check, reaching forward when he sensed a sharp increase in the concentration of Will's scent. His hand found the empath's waist and slipped down a couple of inches to rest on his hip as the other hand slid gently around to rest on his navel before drawing himself forward to rest a chin on his shoulder. He heard a relaxed sigh before he allowed himself to inhale at his neck deeply, forced to swallow the rush of saliva that invaded his mouth in response to the

stimulus of his intoxicating aroma. Dropping his tone to a low, husky timbre in case Will recognised his voice, he made a simple offer.

“Anything you want. All you have to do is ask…”

Chapter 2

Will honed in on the voice behind him, zoning out the grunts, soft moans and sounds of slick, sweaty movements of skin-against-skin around them. The statement had momentarily caught him off-guard. Never had he entered these rooms and been propositioned in such a way. As with most circumstances in his life, work, acquaintances, even the dependency which he felt from his canine pack, usually, the situation was all about take from, not give to him. Unusually, for the first time, Will found himself in a position of power and, however fleeting that power may be under these circumstances, he felt oddly gratified at being afforded the privilege. An unfamiliar warmth pooled beneath his navel in response to the words. Despite being caught a little off-guard, he felt safe in the anonymity provided by the dense, impenetrable darkness. Raw honesty came easily when one wasn't burdened with the knowledge of identity.

I don't know him and he doesn't know me. I can just be, Will thought to himself.

"No one has ever said those words to me before," Will said softly as he raised a hand to rest on the one on his stomach belonging to the stranger.

"Really?" the word danced in a gently-whispered breath against the skin beneath which Will's jugular calmly pulsed. "I find such behaviour incredibly rude and intolerable." Hannibal took a small step back and placed his hands on Will's shoulders, slowly running his fingertips down his shirt, his touch deliberately light across shoulder blades, index fingers tracing down either side of his spine, his thumbs coming to rest gently in the small of his back, fingers splayed again above his hips, barely, just barely, slipping into the narrow space between skin and the material of his waistband.

"Do you trust me?"

In the dark, Will felt himself frown before replying. "Trust is implicit in this situation. Were you to abuse it, everyone in the place would beat you to an unrecognisable pulp…"

Despite the hint of danger dancing on the end of the question, Will remained calm but intrigued. Normally, by this stage, his pants would be around his ankles and some sweaty, desperate no-face would be taking all he could, feasting on Will for his own gratification, sometimes leaving him a panting mess to bring himself to completion. Will made to turn towards the voice as Hannibal placed gentle but firm hands on his upper arms, effectively halting the motion.

"Then you have nothing to worry about."

Will heard the unmistakeable sound of a belt buckle being undone and the sound of it slide through silky material.

"I am going to hazard a guess that you do not know what you want," the voice remained low, steady and reassuring. Will felt his normally busy mind lull in response to its almost hypnotic sound.

“Perhaps I don’t…”

Will wasn’t sure what to expect, but knew he was safe in the Vault and the man wouldn’t do anything to which he didn’t freely consent. So, he didn’t resist as the stranger took hold of his hands and drew them around behind his back, crossing his wrists before weaving the belt around them. Hannibal stepped up close behind Will again and reached around to finger the buttons of his shirt, plucking them undone slowly, baring his chest inch by inch to the warm, humid air as he spoke.

“Will you allow me to explore and perhaps shed some light on what it is you want? As you seem incapable of asking for yourself?”

Will was getting a little lost in the stranger’s touch to register that the words coming from his lips should have sounded a little familiar.

He felt his head drop back to rest on the stranger’s chest as the concession slipped in a rasp, wanton whisper from his lips, powerless to deny the need blossoming beneath his skin, clawing for release.

“Yes…”

Chapter 3

In darkness was freedom. Hannibal was all too well acquainted with that knowledge. Now, however, he revelled in the uninhibited sensuality afforded by this different kind of darkness in which he found himself. Lust and desire, not blood and death, were his companions this evening. He could see the attraction and how the weak-minded could easily become addicted to the drug of sexual anonymity. That thought raised a conflicting consideration in his mind. As he finished undoing the buttons of Will's shirt, his chest now in a warm press against his back, he felt compelled to ask a question.

"Forgive me," he whispered against Will's ear, "despite our being strangers in the dark, I sense you do not make a habit of these types of liaisons." Hannibal felt Will's body tense at the comment but continued in spite of it. Intent on alleviating the tension before continuing, he slipped his fingers around the collar of Will's shirt and drew it gently off his shoulders and down his arms to hang from his bound wrists. "Tell me, not that I am complaining, but why now? What brings you here on this particular day?"

He felt Will relax again slightly under his gentle ministrations. Hannibal's instincts told him that he would use the darkness to his advantage, reveal without exposing himself.

"An encounter. Earlier today. With a man," Will whispered. Hannibal felt a rare but genuine smile breach his features.

"This encounter. It unsettled you?"

"Yes. I couldn't read him. I can read everyone. Without exception."

"Until him…" Hannibal said.

"Yes. Until him." Hannibal almost felt Will mentally shake himself with the change of tone that entered his voice. "No more talk. You're supposed to be exploring my body, not my mind."

Hannibal gave the briefest rumble of a chuckle from behind closed lips. "True."

Will lifted his reclining head from Hannibal's chest and Hannibal could tell he had turned his head to ask, "May I turn around?"

"Not yet. Please," whispered Hannibal, running his palms up Will's sides to gentle caress his chest. A soft moan signalled that so far, Hannibal was doing everything right. He wondered how long it had been since Will, drowned daily by his cursed gift, had allowed himself to feel for himself and himself alone.

He stilled his hands on their downward journey when they reached the belt of his jeans. No words exchanged, he felt Will nod his assent. As Hannibal unbuckled the metal clasp and freed the buttons from their holes, he wondered if tonight's experience would only amplify his own hunger. He had no intention of taking Will Graham's life, sweet and tempting as his

pulsing heart felt beneath his fingers. He was far too interesting a specimen, a mind unlike any other and completely worthy of Hannibal's further attention and study. Perhaps he would have to bring his planned hunt forward…

Hannibal felt Will's breath quicken as he slipped his hands down into his jeans to caress warm, lightly-haired thighs.

"How am I doing so far?" Hannibal husked low and quiet.

"I think you know how you're doing," said Will, shifting his legs so that the waist of his jeans slipped down to his knees. *And what you're doing*, thought Will to himself, grateful for whatever God of Sensuality had seen fit to push this particular man into his path tonight.

Hannibal almost involuntarily found himself inhaling deeply again, and as the rush of hormones coursing through Will's body flooded his nostrils, he found himself dropping to his knees behind the profiler. In one swift but painfully gentle move, Hannibal pressed his lips to the tail of Will's spine while simultaneously reaching between his thighs to glide his palm across the front of his boxers.

"Jesus Christ!" Will rasped, before his knees buckled and without hands to break his fall, collapsed face down on the wide, soft sofa in front of him.

Will was fleetingly glad of the darkness. Uncontrolled breath was coming quick and fast as strong hands gripped his arms and rolled him back to his feet, before pulling him down again to straddle the thighs of the stranger now positioned beneath him.

When the soft, warm voice spoke, Will could sense the smile behind the words. "Now that I have you where I want you, I think it's time to turn things around…"

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Right! That's enough of that! (For now anyway.) Thanks for reading, Hannifans. :D

Will was feeling lightheaded and somewhat giddy with desire. Not his typical modus operandus by any stretch of any imagination. The consuming darkness was only serving to heighten remaining available senses and amplifying the need coursing through his body. He'd come to The Vault frustrated, expecting a quick, mindless ass-pounding to centre his head, and rid himself of the distraction he had felt during his encounter with the inscrutable mindfuck that was Hannibal Lecter. Contrary to that plan, however, he was presently on course for being swept so far off his feet, he may as well be standing in the eye of a hurricane teetering on the edge of a cliff.

He tried to keep the begging tone from his voice. He almost succeeded. Almost.

"Please. Untie my wrists."

"Why would I do that?" Hannibal enquired, his hands resting on Will's bare thighs.

"I want to touch you."

Will felt the stranger beneath him lean forward. He mirrored the movement, hoping to meet his lips. That collision was barely avoided by Hannibal's splayed hand, quickly rising to place against his chest. Will had never before felt so safe in the dark. That touch, resting on a stuttering heartbeat, became the pinpoint of the sensations travelling across the heated skin currently having its own internal battle, shivering goosebumps searching for a spot to breach through the heat.

"You want to touch me now," Hannibal whispered against his lips. "Barely five minutes ago you did not know what you wanted." Hannibal leaned back, allowing the weight of Will's torso to push him resting against the back of the sofa again. The sounds around them had abated to muffled, white noise, both men focussing the access to what senses they had entirely on each other. "Did it occur to you that I didn't want you to be distracted by your own hands? That I wanted to afford you the luxury of my attentions lavished upon you?"

"You really are starting to make me wish I could see you," Will's whisper sounded with the aching need that was threatening to ignite nerve endings and transform them into ash.

"I think you see more than you let on."

Again, Hannibal felt a moment of tension pass through his body and thought he had said too much. "What makes you say that?" Will said softly.

Easily rectified, thought Hannibal. “The way you move your body with mine. It’s as though you read me before I've even turned the page on myself.”

And it was true. Will felt it. Without the distraction of eyes or the sense of sight, he could just *feel* for the sake of feeling itself.

Hannibal kept one hand on Will’s chest, maintaining a teasing distance between them while running his fingers across the nape of his neck and up through the mass of curls at the back of his head. “I think it’s safe to say, that having only just begun my exploration, at I might add your request, I know what’s good for you.”

Will huffed impatiently against the strangers lips. “Has anyone ever told you that you talk too much?”

Hannibal brushed smiling, slightly parted lips against Will’s own. “You might be surprised to hear that I am as good a listener as a talker, and that there are rarely people I find interesting enough with whom to share my thoughts.”

“However, in this moment, while I am talking, I’m also listening to you,” he lifted his hand from Will’s chest and placed it on his cheek, “and your body is singing to me.”

In that moment, both men surged towards each other, closing the space between them.

And while Will Graham was lost, in truth, Hannibal Lecter was not far behind.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will writhed above him as Hannibal explored his naked form with warm, seeking hands. Hannibal couldn't help but compare the movement to a wriggling fish struggling to free itself from the lure snared in its jaw.

"You are extremely sensitive." Will smiled at the whisper that sounded almost enthralled by the realisation. His lack of indulgence in such practices no doubt made his skin incredibly so.

"Under the attention of the right hands. Yes. I am," he whispered, feathering fleeting kisses across the strangers cheek towards his waiting mouth, sinking himself deeper into his lap.

"Damn…" he breathed. "When are you going to stop with the teasing and just take me?" he asked, struggling fruitlessly against the belt that still bound his wrists, rendering him helpless. Not that he was complaining, all things considered.

Hannibal was enjoying this particular chase far too much to give him what he wanted. Now that the fish was baited, he would strive to see how long he could keep him breathlessly gagging for air before giving him the release he desperately demanded.

Now, Hannibal considered, how to keep things interesting. "Here's what I want you to do," Hannibal whispered, as he reached one hand without warning into the front of Will's boxers and the other into the back for a gentle caress. Will lurched forward again in his lap, head falling to rest on the stranger's shoulder. The feeling was exhilarating.

"I want you to go home, lie down in your bed, get a good night's sleep and wake up thinking of me."

Will struggled to sit back, as his hips slid further forward still into the stranger's soft but firm grip. "Excuse me?" he murmured, his mind momentarily muddled by the words and the exploration of skilled fingers exactly where he wanted them.

Hannibal removed his hands and wrapped an arm around Will's waist to manoeuvre him onto his back. Leaning his still fully clothed body, aching from the advances of the empath, into Will's prone form still tangled in shirt and jeans, one final time, he smoothly rose from the sofa.

"Wait," Will's voice was edged with the sound of pleading. Hannibal was finding it difficult to maintain his composure and resist returning to his side.

"What's your name?" Will whispered, struggling onto an elbow, knowing even as he asked the question he shouldn't.

“Why don’t you give me a name. It can also be a safe word. A name that is yours and yours alone.”

Will barely hesitated. “Ripper.”

It was a rare day indeed, when Hannibal Lecter felt his heart threaten to pound its way from within the confines of his chest.

“As in… the Chesapeake Ripper,” Hannibal stated, leaning down towards the still wristbound man. “May I ask why? Do I provoke such fear in you?”

Will felt himself shake his head, though knowing the stranger couldn’t see the response. “No. You just drive me as crazy… as I imagine he is driving the authorities,” Will replied hesitantly with equal consideration and care for his words. *Coupled with the fact that I feel as though you’ve torn my heart from my chest and I may as well be sitting here watching it roast above an open fire…* though he didn’t give voice to that sentiment.

“I see,” Hannibal said quietly, taking pity on Will, leaning down to kiss him gently as he reached around to loosen the belt.

Will remained still. “And you. Do you have a name for me?” he asked through the swell of barely parted lips.

Hannibal brushed his mouth against Will’s ear as he whispered.

“Your name is Wendigo,” he said in muted tone against Will's ear, loosening but not completely removing the belt.

“The time is 10.13pm on 16th April and exactly one month from now, at exactly this time you will be here, at The Vault in Baltimore, Maryland, waiting for your Ripper.” He paused for a beat. "And bring the belt," he husked quietly, as he stood up again.

Will closed his eyes and tried to calm the blood rush. “Wendigo. Isn’t that…”

“Yes.”

And with that Hannibal left The Vault. It wasn’t the kind of therapy in which he normally indulged. But for a specimen as rare and unrefined in its hidden beauty as Will Graham, he was prepared to make an exception.

Will woke the next morning, aching, though perhaps not completely enough in the right kind of way that he wished he could be aching. A firm, confident knock tapped on his hotel door. He rose from the bed and opened it a crack to be greeted by Hannibal Lecter, looking pristine and composed.

Will could barely meet his inscrutable gaze. He knew himself well enough to know that he would soon come to despise those searching amber eyes that saw more than which they had any right to see.

“May I come in?”

Will was hesitant but relented, opening the door a fraction wider to admit him entry.

“I brought breakfast. A little protein scramble to start what I imagine will be another gruelling day in search and exploration of the criminal mind…”

Chapter End Notes

And there's the first arc. Will ain't easy, he just needs a little tenderness. :)

Chapter 6

Will checked his watch as he walked down the street towards The Vault. It was just before 10pm. Too early and he might have to fend off unwelcome advances. Too late and he might miss his window of opportunity. Timing seemed important to his Ripper. He smiled at the thought of his impulsive choice in christening the stranger with such an unusual name and safe word, but in that moment, the instinct had just felt *right*. He didn't hesitate as he crossed the street towards the road that would take him to his destination.

While Hannibal Lecter watched, tracking his prey from the warmth of a coffee shop not fifty metres away.

It was little wonder that Hannibal Lecter found a friend in darkness. He had sought solace in its devouring of the cold light of day on countless occasions. This darkness however, was a whole other beast, a companion on whom he could rely to help him feast on the welcoming flesh of one Will Graham. He had used the past month to get closer to the man, exploring his mind, like a climber scales an unknown rock face with its hidden crevasses and rugged surfaces that concealed small kinks into which one could gain the barest foothold, if one knew just how to expose the chinks beneath the unexplored features…

Will felt the spot in the sofa beside him dip softly.

"Hello Wendigo."

"It's good to not see you again, Ripper," Will said through a smile as he slid his hand across the fabric towards his leg.

And you won't see me for some time yet, thought Hannibal to himself, *at least not before it's too late.* Regrettably, Hannibal had already concluded that he would have to bring their anonymous liaison to an end. The early signs of encephalitis were making their appearance in the behaviour and actions of Will Graham. Hannibal's plan to frame him for the copycat killings would soon come to fruition. Such a pity. At least, he would have this night to store away in his memory palace.

"You're unusually quiet by comparison to our first encounter," Will said, forcing the words out calmly as he moved closer to press his arm against his mysterious, rare unknown. Truth be told, he wanted nothing more than to tear the man's clothes from his person and beg to be taken. But based on their previous shared experience, Will did not think such an act would be particularly welcome. He was feeling hot. His mind and body burning with anticipation. Still, he bided his time.

Hannibal felt the ghost of a hand over his cheek before he gently took hold of Will's wrist. "Still won't let me touch you?" Will asked.

"I prefer my anonymity to be absolute," he replied, caressing Will's palms with his fingertips before raising them to his lips. "I can tell these are talented hands and are capable of seeing as

much as the eyes." He reached for the hem of Will's sweater. "And I said plainly during our previous encounter, I want to lavish my attentions upon you without your own distraction," he said, pushing the sweater up and over Will's head in one smooth movement. "I want you focussed - completely - on your own pleasure," his words washing over Will like a balm soothing the slashes and wounds he had come to accept in his role profiling the killer mind. "It would gratify me immensely to do this for you. Something about you… I sense you are in need of such attention more than I." Moistened lips hovered teasingly over Will's wrist.

Will's curiosity was burning with every word. How could he read him so well?

"I know what you are thinking, Wendigo, but please. Let us not spoil the illusion, and accept this night for what it is."

"I retract my previous comment. You still talk too much," murmured Will, as The Ripper trailed soft full lips up his arm, shoulder, collarbone and jaw before devouring Will's mouth with his own.

But now that he was here, and having learned as much as he had about the delicious mind beneath the veneer of arguably the FBI's most talented asset, Hannibal's appreciation of the counterpoint to his own very existence had grown exponentially. Now, in this moment, Hannibal wasn't sure he could go through with an act as baseless as taking Will's body for his own gratification, on the verge as he was of permitting the self-consumption of Will's own mind. He almost frowned to himself. Such hints of compassion were something of which he had not considered himself capable. And now, they were proving somewhat problematic. He was beginning to see Will as more than a mere chess piece to sacrifice from his board.

Will, it seemed, was proving a deft hand at driving any hesitation from Hannibal's considerations, losing himself in the kiss and doing a very good job of taking Hannibal along for the ride. Hannibal felt the rumble in Will's chest as his kiss became increasingly heated. Sliding his hand down his chest, he fingered the belt around his waist. "You're wearing it."

Will smiled against his lips. "You told me to bring it."

And as Hannibal removed the belt to bind him again, he pushed Will with affectionate care to lay flat on the sofa beneath them. Dragging jeans down trembling thighs, he devoured him, whilst in those intervening seconds, realising and accepting that somehow, he must find a way to keep Will Graham.

Chapter 7

"It's a courtship…"

Alana's words echoed in Will's ears.

And it was undeniably true. In permitting, even welcoming, the seduction of his mind by Hannibal Lecter and his carefully structured path towards the trap he and Jack Crawford had devised, Will was losing himself. If he wasn't lost already to the beast. He stood alone in the eye of Hannibal's storm, snared by a demon in a person suit intent on setting free the beast within Will himself, the animal that he had striven to tame for so long.

Will needed to ground himself again. To feel the terra firma that only touch could bring. He glanced at the clock on his dashboard. It was nearly 10pm on October 16th. It was a slim chance that his mysterious Ripper would be at their designated spot in The Vault. But it was a chance worth taking.

Even in the months Will had enjoyed the hospitality of Frederick Chilton, Hannibal had kept their regular appointment open in The Vault. He returned each month, same time, same date, not to seek out another, but merely to relive those precious few but undeniably tempestuous moments in the arms of the man that was slowly but certainly finding his way into Hannibal's own. He smiled to himself as he sat on the sofa, savouring the thought. While he had not managed to keep Will for himself, he was comforted by the knowledge of always knowing exactly where he was. And while Hannibal had been thrilled by Will's suggestion to resume their therapy sessions, he suspected that Will would seek to release the physical frustration of again being in such close quarters while continuing to deny himself the truth of his physical desires.

The game Will was playing was a dangerous one. They both knew it and both were powerless to resist the relentless pull of the other. Hannibal was enraptured by the sheer audacity of his attempts to lure him into Jack Crawford's trap, the culmination of which he accepted would either make or break them both.

He inhaled the sweat-drenched humanity around him and caught the scent.

He's here.

Hannibal barely had time to process the realisation when he felt Will's hands glide up his thighs and swoop forward without hesitation to capture his lips in a breath-stealing kiss. He found Hannibal's hands and intertwined their fingers to bring them up above his head. Hannibal's physical reaction was instantaneous, testimony to the effect of the proximity of Will Graham on his body.

"That's the kind of hello I could get used to," Will murmured as he released his hands, leaned back from the kiss and reached for the belt around his waist. *And this was a version of Will that I could very much grow accustomed to,* Hannibal thought. He sensed Will wanted him to

keep his hands above his head so remained still. Will wrapped and fastened the belt around his wrists and hitched it to the hook on the wall behind Hannibal's head.

"Is this OK?" Will whispered. As far as Hannibal was concerned, it was more than OK. He opted for silence, curious to allow whatever Will was planning to play out.

Straddling him, Will began without preamble, to undo the buttons of his shirt. "Not so talkative today, are we?"

"Maybe you've left me breathless. Lost for words, my Wendigo…"

The soft, self-depreciating laugh that Hannibal felt against his cheek told him exactly what he expected to hear from the man. "You don't consider yourself capable of rendering a lover speechless?"

Will's hands paused in their exploration. "Is that what we are now? Lovers?" Will enquired. But he didn't give Hannibal time to answer, opting instead to silence him again with hunger lips.

Will could feel his body hum. As the electricity flowed between their bodies, Will's fingers gently scraping across Hannibal's back, he wanted nothing more than to elicit the same sensations from the man beneath him. The man's composure was breathtaking. He felt his skin tremble with anticipation and as if in answer to his silent plea, Will felt the same reaction from his Ripper.

An image of a naked, glistening body belonging to his psychiatrist appeared in his mind. Dangerously close, lost in the moment, before he could think, the name fell from his lips against his strangers own.

"Hannibal…" he rasped soft and low.

Everything went still and silent as both men absorbed the shared revelation.

Chapter 8

If Hannibal had for but an instant thought that the situation in which he currently found himself could not be any more delicious, he rapidly corrected that misconception.

“Fuck,” Will said, breaking the silence between them. “I’m sorry…” Hannibal felt Will shift his legs back as though to beat an embarrassed retreat.

Hannibal immediately bent his own legs at the knee behind Will, effectively tipping him back towards the straining fabric around his hips, trapping him between his torso and his still trousered thighs. Though not for long, Hannibal promised himself. “Oh no you don’t,” Hannibal said firmly, causing Will to pause in his struggle to escape.

Will remained silent though Hannibal could sense the embarrassment ebbing from him and filtering into the space between them. The opportunity Hannibal had been waiting for had presented itself in a dark room to what Will Graham knew to be nothing more than a stranger and it would be a cold day in the circle of the devil’s lair before Hannibal allowed this golden opportunity to slip away. Hannibal reigned back his enthusiasm before speaking calmly.

“That’s his name, isn’t it? The man you mentioned when we first met? He troubles you still.”

“You have no idea…” Hannibal barely caught the whispered sigh but he did nonetheless.

He took a deep, cleansing breath before he continued. “I want you to listen to me. Focus on my words.”

“I’m listening,” Will spoke softly.

“You have my complete permission to use me to fantasise about this man. Let your inhibitions go and permit me to be the clay you mould into whatever shape you wish. I will do anything you consider appropriate - or inappropriate for that matter - to help rid you of this frustration.” Will could hear the genuineness in the words. He wasn’t sure what he’d done to deserve such understanding. Perhaps Hannibal was right, Will mused. Perhaps God not only felt good while killing, he felt good while watching others do it too. This stranger - his Ripper - could be considered nothing less than a gift from God.

Will however, was briefly resistant. He couldn’t prevent the ingrained feeling of wrongness at his attraction to the psychiatrist. “How very noble of you,” Will said sardonically to the suddenly oppressive dark around him. Hannibal flexed his thighs again, moving his hips towards the empath to remind him that Will was the one in control and Hannibal was completely at his mercy.

“Do not fight your feelings,” he whispered, the sound of his voice doing nothing to dampen Will’s growing enthusiasm for the idea. Hannibal’s form took shape before his eyes. “Tell me about him.”

“I can’t,” Will stammered. “It would be a breach of my personal and professional ethics.”

“Something innocuous then,” Hannibal continued, relaxed now, even in his prone position.

Will thought for a moment. What harm could it truly do in this most anonymous of situations? No one would ever know, and it might even help to release the pent up feelings that coursed through him at the mere thought of Hannibal Lecter…

“He fascinates me. I— I want to know him. All of him. Inside and out. He is tall, imposing in his stature. His eyes, penetrating. He knows me like no one has ever before, ever even bothered to know.” Relaxed now, Will resumed his gentle caress of Hannibal’s chest. “Sometimes, I feel as though I can’t breathe when I’m near him….” It was all Hannibal could do to keep his own breathing steady, feeling the drag of the far-off quality Will’s voice had taken lull him into the fantasy Will was weaving for himself. “And his voice…” Will paused. “I feel as though I’m losing myself in him. I’m reaching a point where I can no longer tell where he ends and I begin…”

Hannibal’s voice was hoarse with want, only just managing to maintain the American inflections he had honed for these occasions. “If you don’t kiss me now…” So Will did.

An interruption of any other form, Hannibal would have considered rude.

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

So yeah. I guess I just really needed to get this out of my system.

Apologies to anyone familiar with Lithuanian. Google translate all the way. English translation in the end notes.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Emboldened by the confidence he could feel in the presence of his Ripper, Will reluctantly broke the heated kiss. Its escalation had driven him mad with hungry desire and after his willing concession to permit Will whatever he wanted to take from him in pursuit of his own satisfaction, Will was determined to demonstrate just how effective a lover he could be with the right incentives. He eagerly reached for the buttons on the man's trousers allowing brief, light touches against his straining flesh, heightening both men's anticipation.

"One more thing…" Hannibal groaned. Will paused, keen to meet whatever needs his Ripper asked of him.

"You mentioned his voice, amongst his other attributes, in a way that suggested it had an effect on you. Is his voice… unusual somehow?"

Will continued his motions, wrapping his fingers around the waist of the man's trousers to pull them gently down along with his boxers. Hannibal allowed himself a sigh, welcoming the release and escape from the material.

"He is of Eastern European descent. So he has a rather unusual accent. It's soft, hypnotic. If I had to attribute a form to it, I might label it liquid smoke." Hannibal wished he could see Will's eyes right now, imagining the dark pools, wide and wild with barely repressed lust.

Will crawled up Hannibal's body and resumed the movement of his lips across the expanse of Hannibal's chest.

Hannibal made the calculation in his mind and found he couldn't resist taking the risk. Though he never rolled the dice without knowing where they were going to fall.

"May I have your permission to try something?" Will felt himself smile again at the degree of power and trust the man was placing in him. He certainly wasn't going to abuse it.

"Please," he whispered, exhaling warm breath over Hannibal's navel as he replied.

"You've shown a great degree of trust in me, Wendigo. So now, I'm going to tell you something about myself," Hannibal continued, nudging him upwards with his knee,

manoeuvring him so as to bring them face-to-face. “Lean closer.”

Will leaned down, placing his hands on the back of the sofa to steady himself above his Ripper.

“I, am a Professor of Languages.” Not a lie, Hannibal did indeed have a PhD in the subject.

“Oh?”

“I have extensive knowledge of nearly a dozen, and several Eastern European dialects. They, in fact, intrigue me the most, being so rare and undervalued for their quirks and nuances.”

Will didn’t need a navigator to tell him where the conversation was going. Keen to resume his ever-expanding knowledge of this beautiful stranger's body, Will asked directly.

“Lithuanian?”

“Yes,” came the reply. “I can speak very well in native dialects as well.”

Though Will had never heard Hannibal speak in his native tongue, his curiosity and interest was only further fuelled by the man’s revelations to find out exactly how that would sound. The man’s silky tones were attractive enough, but for him to perhaps emulate Hannibal while Will imagined the doctor’s body beneath him was painfully irresistible.

“Please…”

Hannibal smiled at the pleading tone in Will’s voice. How could he deny him anything? It was all the word needed for Hannibal to let the Ripper out to play.

“Savo tiesas ir savo grožiu, jūs nesuprantate galią jūs laikykite virš manęs.”

Will again found himself grateful for the dark. He was pretty sure the look of dumbstruck, slack-jawed awe would have sent the man running.

“Jesus Fucking Christ,” he breathed, doing nothing to disguise the effect the words had on him. “You sound just like him…”

So Hannibal continued.

"Žiūriu į tave ir jaučiuosi beatodairiškai. Norėčiau sunaikinti pasaulį vos ją kurti vėl į savo atvaizdą."

Now completely unable to control the lust pulsing through his body, Will reached for Hannibal, his mouth quickly joining his hands.

Hannibal, still bound to the hook behind him, tossed his head back hard, embracing the pleasure with no inhibition, the image of Will Graham burning bright in his mind’s eye bringing his eager and compliant body to completion, making him almost unbearably hot.

He struggled to give form to his final words and the promise they held to Will. A fantasy of his own that he had every intention of fulfilling with Will Graham by his side.

"Įsivaizduoju, maudomi mėnesiena ir kraujo. Ir tai yra šlovingas, mano meilė…"

Chapter End Notes

“In your truth and in your beauty, you do not understand the power you hold over me.”

“I look at you and I feel reckless. I would destroy the world just to rebuild it again in your image.”

"I imagine you bathed in moonlight and blood. And it is glorious, my love. "

Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

Italian translations in the end notes.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The best laid plans of mice and men? Often go awry.

This was a fact to which Will Graham could readily testify. The trap had been set and Hannibal had walked into it of his own volition, eyes wide open. In the aftermath of the destruction, he had allowed Will, despite his agonising betrayal, to live.

It must be love.

Now, as he stood at the entrance to the room in the Uffizi Gallery that La Primavera called home, he felt the pang of long buried passion that only the sight of Hannibal Lecter could rouse within him. His blood sang as it rushed through his veins, sharpening senses and demanding fulfilment.

He had to get out before he did something reprehensible; profess his love, wrap Hannibal in his arms and promise never to leave him, kiss him until lips were raw and the sweet taste of Hannibal's blood flooded his mouth.

Will retreated. There was only one thing to do. One place to go in search of release.

Hannibal frequently found the predictable pattern of human behaviour almost tiresome. But this was Will Graham. Deliciously predictable in some ways, defying definition in so many others. The unmistakeable sense of his presence hovered behind him, no doubt weighing up their situation, now that they had found each other once again or rather, now that Hannibal had lured him back into his world.

Hannibal did not pause nor lift his eyes from his sketch, the lines of his next banquet clearly etched on the paper in front of him, gazed languidly back at him through half-lidded eyes. Bedelia and Will. Both he had sampled and neither had he found wanting.

But right now, he found himself wanting something he had not had the pleasure of tasting in over nine months since he had left Will in a pool of his own blood in his Baltimore home. As he heard him slip away, instinctively Hannibal knew where he would find him. This was Florence after all. And every city, particularly one as old as this and steeped in multi-cultural tastes and predilections, possessed their own version of The Vault.

Will walked through the rooms, glancing to his left and right at the bodies, some stretched out, some casually sitting wrapped around the body of another. He wasn't sure what he was looking for. This was Italy and like the places, the culture and the food, the people themselves simply did not "do" unattractive. Still, his eyes found none that could measure up to Hannibal. So he entered the darkness and made his way across the room to sit down. Soft leather yielded to the weight of his body. He lay back and sighed, momentarily losing himself in his mind palace to the surrogate he had had the good fortune to happen upon, once upon a time, in a town called Baltimore. A short spell of what felt like 20 minutes passed before Will felt the warmth of another body recline next to him.

"Ti andrebbe di compagnia?"

Will's understanding of the language was woeful, but he knew enough to be able to apologise for his ignorance. *"Perdonami. Americano. Non parlo la lingua."*

How utterly adorable, thought Hannibal to himself. *"Forse possiamo trovare un altro mezzo di comunicazione, allora…"* he said as he reached for Will.

And while Will felt the blossoming familiarity at the feel of the kiss, he dismissed it, knowing that it could not be his Ripper. He wondered briefly if every intimate interaction he would experience in the shadow of his obsession with Hannibal would be subsumed by his constant craving for the man.

Will felt his skin tingle as deft questioning fingers ran over the scar that graced his torso.

"A parting gift," Will said, not breaking the kiss. "From an old friend."

"*Hai degli amici interessanti,*" murmured Hannibal, the Italian inflections doing their job and increasing Will's ardour as he pushed him down into the seat beneath them.

"The world is all the more interesting for having them in it," said Will, pulling them together in a hard embrace that silenced them both, but for the sweet, heady sounds of shifting leather and soft, telling moans that closed the distance of nine months into a singular point of mutual pleasure.

Will woke alone in the dark a short time later. He hadn't felt so satisfied neither in mind, since his last bloodless encounter with Hannibal, nor body, since colliding, writhing bodies with his Ripper at The Vault in Baltimore.

He ran his hand across his face and through his hair. This was unsustainable, and dangerous in its own way, though less so than perhaps baring your throat to the mouth of a serial killer, he thought wryly. Still, Will wondered how many more times he would - he could - deny himself the one source of pleasure he truly, achingly desired.

Chapter End Notes

"Would you care for some company?"

"Pardon me. American. I don't understand the language."

"Perhaps we can explore another form of communication then..."

"You have some interesting friends."

So the finale pends, and I intend to have some fun deciding how it will play out under these circumstances. To live, or to die? That, is the question... :)

Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

> Do the Demon and the Lamb have time for a romantic interlude before the arrival of the Dragon? Hell yes they do.
>
> Epilogue later this evening. :) Any desire for a sequel?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Do you ache for him?”

Were Will completely honest with himself, yes he did. And while his regular visits to his mind palace had sated him to a degree, little could compare to the sight of his nemesis in the flesh.

“Was it good to see me?”

It had been three long years. It wasn’t just good to see Hannibal. It was maddeningly so.

“I want to meet Lecter. How would I manage that?”

Now, humiliatingly bound to a standing gurney before him in his private space at the BSCHI, Will felt the physical ache return in full force.

Those three agonising years apart vanished as the two men gazed appraisingly at each other, mutual longing concealed beneath the finely-tuned, counterfeit gentleness of the Lamb and the calm demeanour of the Demon determined to devour him whole.

“I need you, Hannibal.”

The pieces on Hannibal’s side of the game were moving into position. Will Graham’s becoming was but a few moves away.

“Please?”

Will watched the passing countryside in silent contemplation as Hannibal drove them towards his house on the bluff and weighed his options. In stark truth, Will didn’t want to be rid of Hannibal, could all too easily imagine the grey undertones that would dominate his own world in the absence of the bright red strokes bestowed by his hands. His righteousness however, like an irrepressible itch in his brain, demanded that he rid the world of the man. Or at least, that’s what he told himself. Maybe he couldn’t live without him, but tonight, one way or another, he intended to find out.

Hannibal grabbed his upper arms and tossed Will unceremoniously onto the bed. Will raised himself on his elbows and made to back away up the mattress and out of Hannibal's reach, but too quick, the man grabbed his ankles and pulled him towards him again, flat onto the bed as Hannibal moved above him. "There are many things of which I think little in this world, Will," Hannibal stated, bracing himself above Will's body. "Intellectually, life is a wondrous and satisfying experience. Emotionally however, I've found it somewhat lacking." Seeing the intent on Hannibal's face that would not be denied, Will twisted his body and turned onto his stomach. "Until I discovered you," he whispered, pressing himself further into Will's splayed form.

Will's heart pounded wildly, reverberating through the soft blankets, now strewn across Hannibal's bed during their struggle. The want was almost overpowering. He closed his eyes and concentrated his mind on the purpose of their presence here. "You realise he's out there now. Watching."

"The Dragon can wait," said Hannibal, calm determination telling in every move he made to divest Will of his clothing. On this night, he would coalesce into one kiss, every previous encounter both in light and in dark, that he had known with Will Graham, and Will, had unknowingly shared with him.

"You realise in your resistance, futile as it is, you are denying yourself as much as you are denying me…" Hannibal's words tingled on the back of Will's neck. He took his jaw gently between fingers and made to turn Will's lips towards his own.

Will tilted his head back, out of immediate reach. "No."

"No?"

Will gave a small shake of his head. "No kissing."

"May I ask why?" enquired Hannibal, resting his lips against Will's ear, leaning closer still and trapping his own arousal between their bodies.

Will had no intention of giving up that information to Hannibal. The man wielded enough power over him already. The thought of sealing what they were, what Hannibal had made him, with something as intimate as a kiss was unacceptable to Will. But he would allow one concession, on this night that would likely be their last.

"I just— I just want to feel you. I want you inside me."

Hannibal paused for no more than a beat. "Very well. As you desire," acquiescing to the request safe in the knowledge that the upper hand remained his. He moved with gentle purpose within his empath, bodies as synchronous as the minds within their mortal, throbbing coils. And as senses heightened towards their shared goal, Hannibal resorted to the one piece of intimate knowledge about Will that he knew would crumble his defences. In the throes of his own passion he spoke with deliberate purpose.

"Jūs esate mano, mylimieji. Amžinybę. Ne, net mirties mes būti atskirai."

Just as Hannibal felt his own pleasure crash relentlessly over and through him, he managed two more strangled words.

“Pasidavimas, Will.”

And that, as they say, was that for the empath.

At the peak of Will’s climax, he had one clarifying realisation. The vault in the room in his mind palace that had been created for his Ripper, where Will stored his memories of their nights together flashed in his mind. Now, instead of his faceless stranger, Hannibal lay there, waiting for him. Will Graham was the only one in the world who knew the combination to open that lock. For now, the world would be safe from Hannibal, as long as Will kept him close.

And given that fate had determined he had no say in the matter, Will surrendered.

While from his dark concealed vantage point, the Dragon observed.

Will sat up against the pillows and watched Hannibal pull on a sweater and trousers and exit the bedroom. He heard the clink of crystal and the cork pop from the bottle and imagined the doctor pour himself a glass of wine, swirling the dark red liquid, watching his own reflection on its surface twist and swirl. It was in that moment that Will heard the loud sound of shattering glass puncture the air. He calmly rose from the bed and pulled on his shirt and trousers, raising his own wine glass to his lips as he left the bedroom and headed for the dining room.

The Dragon was here.

Chapter End Notes

"You are my eternal beloved. Not even in death will we be apart."

"Surrender, Will."

Epilogue

Chapter Notes

The final dance. Parting is such sweet sorrow...

Their red wedding. Consummated in moonlight. Sanctified by the blood of the Dragon.

Will felt the grip around his waist tighten. Affectionate, possessive. All Hannibal. His Hannibal. “Will?”

He opened his eyes. His gaze longing, trailed up Hannibal’s blood-soaked body to his lips. His face was inches away from Will’s own. His breath quickened. Will felt his hands move almost of their own volition up Hannibal’s arms, skim across his shoulders and come to rest either side of his neck, tense from the adrenaline-fuelled response coursing through his body. His thumbs gently caressed the smooth jawline beneath.

“Beautiful…”

It was the only word Hannibal heard Will murmur against his lips before bringing them together.

Will felt his heart burst into a thousand shards of bloodied glass, radiating outwards, pushing through every pore of his skin.

It was only after many moments of exploration that Will drew them apart, realisation clear in his eyes. “You,” he whispered, before bringing their lips together again, the kiss agonisingly tender in its gentleness.

He inhaled deeply as he allowed his eyes to slip shut, struggling to process so many simultaneous sensory reactions pulsing through him. The smell of the man tasting him, so familiar yet so new. The sensation of his tongue against Will’s own, smooth, gentle and sensual between barely open lips, twisted the shards pushing through Will’s skin. The ripples of each move echoed achingly through his body as memories of The Vault converged in his mind. In an attempt to alleviate the physical ache, Will felt Hannibal draw their bodies closer still, moulding them together effortlessly.

“It was always you.” Will whispered, leaning his head against Hannibal’s shoulder and drawing his arm around his neck, not trusting his own body to remain upright. Will allowed the gates of his empathy to open completely and flood his senses. For the first time, he truly felt Hannibal. Not just the killer within, but the depths of the man himself, and the barely contained, endless passion he held for Will.

Some people describe that “kiss,” the one that overshadows every other touch of lips that ever preceded it, as a feeling of falling into an abyss, swallowed up by the Earth, drowning, consumed whole.

Will Graham felt as though he’d found a place among the stars.

And as Will dragged them both over the cliff edge and Hannibal willingly followed, in that moment both men knew, alive or dead, they could never be without each other.

Bound by blood. Finally free.

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